

Policies and Procedures Reflection

Creating a Policies and Procedures Manual is a great exercise. It is a very useful tool for any library. Before working in our library, I was teaching in the regular classroom. I was pressed into service because my predecessor died unexpectedly. Aside from having a BA in English and a love of books, I had no training whatsoever. I walked into a situation where there was no P & P Manual, lesson plans, organization, nothing. Obviously it would have been a huge help to have a P & P Manual in that situation. Even if your situation isn't so extreme, it's a tool every library should have. In addition to mission statements, policies and procedures, it's nice to have a place to go to when you need to know anything specific pertaining to the library.

I added a couple of sections that are helpful to us in our situation. I added a whole section on volunteers. We have roughly sixty volunteers working in our library. In the volunteer section I included all documents pertaining to volunteers.

I added a section on cataloging specifications. We purchase books through several companies like Titlewave. I included cataloging specifications for each company as well as bar code ranges for each company.

In my P & P Manual I also have a yearly calendar. For example, the letter soliciting volunteers needs to be ready to go out in May. In my calendar section is a copy of that letter. There are certain tasks that need to be initiated/done at a certain time each year. The yearly calendar is a guideline for us which enables us to stay on top of things.

Also included is paperwork for Alexandria and other subscriptions. I've added paperwork which has contact info, account numbers, etc. All the information will be in one place if someone else should need to step in for some reason.

I must say, writing a selection policy and a challenge procedure has been on my "to do" list for some time. Inevitably those tasks always have been shoved to the bottom of the list for one reason or another. Consequently, I'm glad we have done this as our class exercise. Now I have a working document that I can edit if need be.

Putting together the P & P Manual has been one of the most useful exercises in Lib. 715 and Lib 720. I know I and others will get much use from it.